

**Rocky Flats Citizens Advisory Board
Recommendation 96-6**

**to the U.S. Department of Energy
on the Fiscal Year 1998 Rocky Flats Budget Submission**

Approved April 11, 1996

The Rocky Flats Citizens Advisory Board has recently completed a review of the FY 98 Rocky Flats Environmental Technology Site budget submission. As a result of this review, RFCAB offers the following recommendations.

1) Base Costs

RFCAB is concerned that the Basic Operations and Essential Services (BOES) costs are excessive. These BOES costs should be carefully examined, as this funding could instead be applied to specific cleanup activities. This analysis should include:

- A comparison of base cost elements with respect to the site's mission. For example, does it make sense to upgrade communications systems with fiber optic capabilities for buildings or facilities that in a few short years will be deactivated and decommissioned?
- An examination of staffing levels, particularly with respect to middle management, both within the contractor and RFFO organizations. Is maximum efficiency being achieved with the number of persons employed?
- An examination of the regulatory and general support costs. Are there duplicative efforts in oversight and regulatory functions?

RFCAB would like to explore further the issue of base cost reductions. As such, we request that regular briefings be scheduled with the Site Wide Issues Committee on the site's efforts towards reducing base costs. Part of this briefing should include information as to what percentage of the current base costs are true mortgage costs. As mortgage reduction activities take place, it should be possible to show that this percentage decreases over time.

2) Litigation Costs

RFCAB is surprised over the amount of litigation costs being picked up by DOE to cover the legal

expenses of former contractors and also is concerned that these litigation costs come out of the local site's budget. The outcome(s) of this litigation will result in precedent that will be applicable nationwide. Additionally, mission and operational direction has been controlled by headquarters, not individual sites. Therefore, these are DOE corporate costs that should be allocated from headquarters sources and should not diminish and compete with funds for the active site mission of material stabilization, cleanup, waste management, and mortgage reduction.

3) Waste Disposition Activities

RFCAB would like to see increased funding for waste disposition activities. Increased funding should be directed towards the following:

- The analysis of alternatives for, and the design and construction of, an on-site TRU waste storage facility. The instability associated with the opening of WIPP by 1998 and the likely surge of TRU waste from required plutonium residue stabilization activities necessitate the development of safe, on-site TRU waste storage capacity.
- The development or procurement of new state-of-the-art non-destructive assay technology that will assist the site in meeting new waste acceptance criteria for shipments of material to Envirocare.
- The development of monitorable and retrievable low-level waste storage capacity, either through the conversion of existing facilities or the construction of new above ground structures.

4) Deactivation and Decommissioning

RFCAB is concerned that necessary actions are not being carried out to facilitate the deactivation and decommissioning of buildings in order to lower the mortgage costs. The delay in developing on-site low-level waste storage capacity must be overturned in order to achieve mortgage reduction. To further emphasize the importance of mortgage reduction, RFCAB advises that DOE appoint within its organization a "mortgage reduction czar" with the responsibility of promoting planning for and implementation of deactivation and decommissioning activities.

5) Prioritization Methodology

RFCAB endorses the general format of the new prioritization methodology developed by RFFO for use in the FY 98 budget process. Although RFCAB has not had an opportunity to directly apply the methodology, it is impressed by its brevity and simplicity. As planning progresses for the FY 99 budget cycle, RFCAB requests more time be allocated to further examine the methodology and results.

6) Participation in the FY 99 Process

RFCAB recognizes the real-time involvement in the FY 98 budget process it has had as Rocky Flats strives to meet its April 15 budget submission deadline. We have not had, however, an extended opportunity to analyze in detail the prioritization methodology and results, nor the work break down structure developed for the FY 98 process. We request, therefore, that we be involved earlier in the FY 99 budget cycle in order to increase our level of understanding and participation.

The Rocky Flats Citizens Advisory Board is a community advisory group that reviews and provides recommendations on cleanup plans for Rocky Flats, a former nuclear weapons plant outside of Denver, Colorado.

[Back to Index CAB Recommendations](#)

[Home](#) | [Citizens Advisory Board Info](#) | [Rocky Flats Info](#) | [Links](#) | [Feedback & Questions](#)